

Message Text

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S E C R E T GABORONE 2761

NODIS CHEROKEE FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJ: CARVER/CHAND MEETING WITH SITHOLE

1. CARVER AND CHAND MET WITH SITHOLE AND SIX SUPPORTERS FRIDAY AFTERNOON. SITHOLE LED OFF WITH A FAIRLY LENGTHY BUT WELL-PRESENTED EXPOSITION OF AREAS OF AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT. HE FOUND LARGE AREAS OF COMMON GROUND WITH THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL. IN PARTICULAR HE SUPPORTED THE PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSAL ADULT SUFFRAGE, DESCRIBING THE PRESENT WAR AS A "FRANCHISE WAR" WHICH WOULD END WHEN ONE MAN ONE VOTE WAS ACHIEVED. HE ALSO SUPPORTED THE PRINCIPLES OF INDEPENDENCE BASED ON MAJORITY RULE, NON-RACIALISM, THE BILL OF RIGHTS CONTAINED IN THE PROPOSALS. HOWEVER, HE EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS RELATED TO THE TRANSITION PERIOD. HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF POWER CONCENTRATED IN THE HANDS OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER WITH VIRTUALLY NO CONTRGLS EXERCISED BY THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE. HIS CONCERN WAS THAT THE BRITISH MIGHT ONCE AGAIN TURN OVER POWER TO SOMEONE ELSE, AS THEY HAD AT THE TIME OF UDI. THIS TIME THOUGH HE WAS CONCERNED IT WOULD BE TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. HE ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT HOW WE PLANNED TO MOVE FROM A CEASEFIRE TO DISARMAMENT. TO WHOM, HE ASKED, WOULD THE ARMS BE TURNED OVER. HE SAW NO ONE WHO COULD BE TRUSTED FOR THIS.

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2. LORD CARVER GAVE HIS STANDARD EXPOSITION OF IDEAS ABOUT THE TRANSITION PERIOD INCLUDING ITS ORGANIZATION AND THAT OF THE INDEPENDENCE ARMY. PREM CHAND OUTLINED THE ROLE OF THE UN DURING THE CEASEFIRE AND TRANSITION PERIOD. LORD CARVER SUGGESTED THE DRAWING UP OF A LIST OF ZIMBABWEANS WHO COULD HAVE DIRECT ACCESS TO THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER WHEN THEY REQUESTED IT. SITHOLE SUGGESTED A COMMISSION OF FIVE MEMBERS; THOUGH HE WAS

NOT CLEAR ABOUT JUST WHO THESE MEMBERS WOULD BE. HE DID AGREE, HOWEVER, THAT IT COULD BE ADVISORY RATHER THAN CONSTITUTIONAL, PROVIDED SUCH A BODY WERE MADE MANDATORY IN THE TRANSITION CONSTITUTION (THOUGH HE WENT BACK TO HIS ORIGINAL IDEA IN THE PRESS CONFERENCE AFTERWARDS). LORD CARVER ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WAS A PROVISION FOR SUCH AN ADVISORY COMMISSION IN THE WHITE PAPER AND PROMISED THAT HE WOULD GIVE CONSIDERATION TO THE IDEA.

3. SITHOLE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER WHAT HE CONSIDERED TO BE THE PARTIALITY BEING SHOWN BY THE BRITISH TO THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. HE CLAIMED THAT HE HAD MANY SUPPORTERS AMONG THE LIBERATION FORCES; BUT CONFESSED MANY DID NOT BELIEVE HIM. HE COMPLAINED THAT WHEN HE OFFERED TO DEMONSTRATE HIS SUPPORT BY TAKING PEOPLE TO OPERATIONAL AREAS, THEY REFUSED. HE DID, HOWEVER, GENERALLY AGREE WITH LORD CARVER'S OUTLINE OF HIS PROPOSAL TO NEUTRALIZE ARMED FORCES DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD. CARVER OFFERED TO HAVE HIS MILITARY EXPERTS GET IN TOUCH WITH SITHOLE'S, TWO OF WHOM WERE MEMBERS OF SITHOLE'S GROUP. AFTER THE MEETING, COLONELS REILLY AND RAUS SPOKE TO THE TWO SITHOLE MILITARY MEN. THEY MADE TENTATIVE ARRANGEMENTS TO GET TOGETHER AT A LATER TIME. HOWEVER, AT OUR MEETING WITH LORD CARVER THAT EVENING, WEIR AND I RECOMMENDED AGAINST THIS AND CARVER INSTRUCTED REILLY NOT REPEAT NOT TO FOLLOW UP ON THE ARRANGEMENTS. AT A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER THE MEETING; CARVER STRESSED THE BROAD AREAS OF AGREEMENT WHILE SITHOLE UNDERLINED HIS RESERVATIONS
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ABOUT CARVER'S IDEAS ON TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS.

4. COMMENT: BOTH CHAND AND CARVER WERE GREATLY IMPRESSED BY SITHOLE'S WELL-REASONED, MODERATE AND ARTICULATE PRESENTATION.

5. DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO LUSAKA AND OTHER POSTS AS DESIRED.
NORLAND

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